Mewu

good by the ts'aowa group, as we have already mentioned, and the 681
accused must gradually pay off his debt to the group. The most severe punishment is probably expulsion from the ts'aowa group, which makes a man homeless.

Witnesses are not tortured. They are not /86/ examined in pub- 685
lic but in a separate room, so that they cannot be seen by the accused and thus be exposed to his revenge.

The t'ou-mu also has jurisdiction over members of another tribe 682
whom he can punish. The punishment is not, however, always recognized by the tribe to whom the convicted person belongs. During my stay among the Mewu-Fantzu, for example, the t'ou-mu held a lama prisoner for stealing a gun. The lama belonged to the He-tso Lamasery outside Mewu territory. He had ordered the lama whipped. For this reason no male Mewu-Fantzu ventured into the region of He-tso, since he would have been in danger of being captured.

Disputes between inhabitants of various tents in the same tent 578 ●
community are settled by the t'ou-mu or one of his kuan-shih; like- 721
wise disputes between various tent communities. In such cases violence is seldom resorted to. Disputes between the tent Fantzu and the sedentary Fantzu of the Mewu tribe are very rare. They, too, are settled by the t'ou-mu. On the other hand, there are often quarrels between Fantzu of different tribes, sometimes leading to war.

In former times wars were frequent. But the Mewu-Fantzu fought 701
their last war about 30 years ago, that is, during imperial times. 721
On the other hand, a war was fought just a few years ago, about 100 li to the southwest. It lasted three years and ended only when the ruling feudal lord of Labrang, the "Huang-szu-ling" seized control. If a state of war arises the Huang-szu-ling calls his subordinate t'ou-mu to war. This happened, for example, during my stay when the region between T'ao-chou and Ho-chou, to which the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu and the lamaseries of Labrang and He-tso belong, was endangered by the "long march" of Mao Tse-tung's Communist Army to Shensi. The t'ou-mu recruit soldiers. Every tent must furnish at least one soldier, /87/ sometimes as many as two or three. Each man must bring his own weapons, ammunition and horses, just as in ancient times in the wars of the nomadic peoples, such as the Ch'i-tan and the Mongols. Families who cannot furnish a soldier must give weapons and guns, ammunition and a horse for those who are too poor to furnish their own equipment. The t'ou-mu decides how dangerous the situation is and how many recruits are to be called out.